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POEMS

OF

FAITH AND AFFECTION.

BY

MRS. WM. H. MILBURN.

“He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things, both great and small.
For the dear God, who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.”



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TO THE
MEMORY OF THE LOVED AND LOST,
This Book
IS REVERENTLY AND AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED.

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PREFACE.

THIS little book makes so small pretensions to fame, that it does not even cry mercy to the critical. To those who know the meaning of suffering, it may come soothingly, and with significant sympathy. To the plodders and toilers after this world's aggrandizement, it has no message. To the few, gifted with "the vision and the faculty divine," it may be acceptable.

Neither the solicitations of friends nor the hope of reward has brought it forth. In the language of one whose name ever touches us, reverently, but sadly, — "To me, Poetry has been its own exceeding great reward. It has soothed my afflictions; it has multiplied and refined my enjoyments; it has endeared solitude; and it has given me the habit of wishing to discover the good and the beautiful in all that meets and surrounds me."

To charm and quell the evil spirit that broods so foully and darkly at times over some natures, that in the agony of the fierce conflict they must either conquer or die, — the effort to be interested in, and to accomplish something, is itself a victory. The fair fields of imagination lie open, in exuberant beauty, to all gleaners; and even a simple wild flower may find a welcome amid the cultured productions of richer and rarer growth. Give it room. Though it may not amuse, it claims not to offend, in any wise, the Spirit of Truth and Purity, in which “all our works” should begin, continue, and end; and for whose blessing we pray.



POEMS.

LONGINGS.

COME to me, Spirits of Hope and of
Gladness,
Back to my soul come! and lovingly
throng!

Come! for my soul is surrendered to sadness,
The conflict is maddening! — the bitterness
strong!

Spirit of Song, from my childhood's soft slum-
bers,

Breathed by a reverend head that is low;
Memories of Childhood, whose guilenesses' num-
bers

More of sweet hopes than the future could
show!

Spirit of Friendship, the strong and true-hearted,
Come to me now, from thy home with the blest:
Life has gone sadly ; since sadly we parted, —
I, for the warfare ! — thou, for the Rest !

Spirit of Love ! let thy soft angel pinions
Droop o'er my waiting heart fondly again ;
Blessing and hope, from thy Fairy dominions,
Breathe as of yore, o'er my quivering pain !

Hushed, ah ! all hushed, are ye spirits to cheer
me,
Darkness and weariness come in your stead ;
Life's rugged pathway no succor brings near
me ;
Hushed are the absent, and silent the dead !

Oh ! could I bring you o'er Death's gloomy
portal,
Back from the shadowy Land of our trust,
What were the griefs to a spirit immortal
Of weary and wandering children of dust ?

Spirit above all, and over all bending,
Truthful to sanctify, faithful to guide ;
Comforter Holy, in mercy descending,
Spirit of Peace, ever with me abide !

Fashioned so fearfully, yearning so painfully,
Here, in the darkness, the fever and strife;
Travailing sorely, with blood on the heart-
 tracks, —
Fearing, yet hoping, to rise unto life !

Thou, only Thou, who the wine-press in sorrow
Lonely hast trodden, with footsteps in blood;
By that pale anguish no mortal may borrow,
By the fierce shame of the robe and the rod.

Tempted as we are, yet barring the sinning;
Loving — not thus — as we worship in vain;
Idols ! — we make them, and give what is
 richest,
Shadows we find them, to smile on our pain.

Dust unto dust ! is the end of our striving;
Lord, may we learn then to bear and forgive !
Loving through all things, as Thou didst;
 depriving
“Death of his victory,” thus shall we live.

EDITH.

“Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above;
And life is thorny; and youth is vain;
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain.”

“But never either found another,
To free the hollow heart from paining,—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder.”

COLERIDGE.

UNDER the casement, one grand, solemn
night,

A woman stood with lifted eyes in prayer.
Her soul was strong to suffer and to do;—
You saw it in the flash of her dark eye;
In the proud bearing of her stately form;
In the deep tenderness that shone, like light,
Through features far too pure and highly cast
To know the common, meagre ways of life.
In God's great temple stood she there serene;
His heavens o'erarching her, and at her feet
The beautiful verdure of a sweeping lawn,
That lay half girdled by a trickling stream,
And half, by just a little belt of flowers.

Their breath came to her like a voice from God ;
And the soft dew made answer, like her tears,
And lifted high the grand, old straggling elms
And oaks, that spoke of God's great majesty,
Stretched like a curtain, and a ministry
Of living strength and Heaven's protecting care.
All Nature's voices spoke to her with power,
With the deep harmony her soul was filled.
A wail of anguish rose, no less, to heaven,
And on her lips the scarcely uttered cry, —
“ My Saviour ! I have given all to Thee !
Oh give me something back ! What shall I
have ?

I am so poor, and Thou so rich in love !
This wreck of life, this weary, wretched thing,
These strivings of a nature rich and strong ;
With such vain yearning for a mortal's love,
Wherewith shall they be satisfied ? In youth,
Before Thy sacred altars I have bowed,
And sworn in solemn prayer, low at Thy cross,
For thee to live and die ! To turn in scorn
From the world's hollow pageantries, and live
Thy life of humble trust and earnest truth.
I would be Thine forever, and be true
To that great cause which is the soul's true
life.

But wherefore am I stricken thus, to have
My dearest loved laid mouldering in the dust,
Or scattered by the breath of angry words?
Friendship and love, and childhood's angel
tones,

Remembered like the whisperings of heaven,
Far from me, gone to gladden other life;
And it is cold and dreary here below.

Make room for me, oh gracious Lord of Love,
Low at Thy feet, for I would walk beside
The living waters, and my hungry soul
Feed in the pastures of eternal rest.

Earth is too much for me; it has no room
For one who had no skill in worldly arts,
Or knowledge of the tricks of idle souls;
Nor cool nor crafty to contend and stand
'Gainst evil, powers and principalities!

I, shuddering, stand upon the noon of life,
And at my feet lie wrecks of dearest things;
And dark wings, flapping in the stifling air,
With face like the Great Tempter, seem to
brood

And wait to grasp a soul still loving Thee!
Give me a glimpse of Thee, oh dearest Lord,
From out this dreary darkness. I believe
In Thy great Consolation, more than all

That life has ever brought me ; in Thy love
I would embalm my soul, and make it pure.”
Then, from the sighing wind, “a still, small
voice ”

Came to that woman's heart, and answered,
“ Peace.”

Be comforted, my daughter, in that faith, —
“ The servant cannot be above his Lord.”

Out in the darkness then she wandered forth,
And thoughts of other days came like a flood, —
One fatal memory that would not die.

And did she wish it ? Hope was dead, and
trust,

But “ Love is strong as death,” and love was
there

Among the shadows keeping watch for death.

There was no hope, except what lay beyond

In the great Resurrection. She had loved,

And by that purifying flame her soul

Was fastened high above the wrecks of time.

It was a consecration of herself ;

And brought a benediction, like a prayer.

But there was pain and woe mingled withal ;

For a great wrong lay like a gulf between

Her soul and that man's soul, to whom she gave

What woman has to give but once in life.
Faithless or fickle, proud, or vain and weak ; —
Small where she thought him great, too small
to stand

Firm, when temptation came to test his love.
A breath of slander hissed from serpent
tongues, —

The Siren call of pleasure and of sin, —
And he, for this, forgot his manliness,
His truth and honor, and they trailed the dust.
What then was left for her ? Why, faith in God
And faith in her own nature ; in that love
Which, failing in its object here below,
Was still immortal, and must live and grow
In that white land where souls are clean and
true,

And God unto the pure in heart gives peace.
What more ? Between her soul and his, behold
A gulf of blood rolled yawning at their feet.
War's cruel discipline was in the land ;
And with the bravest, he, in proud array,
Led on the hosts triumphant in the strife.
His name was loudly echoed through the ranks,
And dark Rebellion must succumb and die,
When spirits such as his were in the field.
Thus spake the oracles, and she was dumb, —

For in her heart there was no sympathy
With war or strife or bloodshed ; and her home
Was far away : the country of her love
Lay in Virginia's valley, 'neath the hills,
The proud Blue-Mountain Range, where erst
she climbed

The rugged rocks in childhood, or lay down,
In loving ecstasy, beside the banks
Where Shenandoah laves the fertile earth,
And valley, hill, and fields of golden grain
Show like a fairy picture, when the sun
Throws o'er this favored land his stream of
gold.

Each shrub and tree and rock and babbling
brook, —

Each heart-throb of her noble, struggling
sons, —

All memories of her grand, heroic dead,
Were sacred to her as her earliest prayer ; —
She drank this love in with her mother's milk.
Each fibre of her body and her soul
Quivered in agony when she beheld
The proud battalions marshalled to advance
And desolate this fair inheritance.

And Rudolph she had loved so, he must go, —
“ 'T was honor, his profession, glory, fame,

And conscience," so he told her, and was
gone !

There was for them no parting. Was he false ?
False to his love, could he be true in aught ?

Two years had rolled away, dark years of
crime ;

And History's blackest page we find in these
When History shall record it.

Rudolph was
No coward in the fight — not that low ! — so
He had the honor and the glory and the fame ;
And she was as we found her when she spoke
To God out in his temple, and the sky
And quiet stars bore witness to her truth ;
And God to her spake gently — like Himself !

No sound was in the air, and Edith stood
Lingering, as loth to leave a hallowed place :
Listening, as though to hear once more a voice
Which, heard last in that consecrated spot,
Still filled the air with music, like a dream !
She listened, and she heard a low, rich tone
Rippling the summer stillness, and it said —
" Edith ! "

Was it indeed a spirit's ministry

With audible voice, coming in love's own guise?
"Edith!" And Rudolph stood before her pale
And sad, with locks dishevelled and unshorn:
His brow was damp with travel or with pain,
Or both; his eye had the old fire, and still
The same sad look of tenderness, that stirred
Her heart's deep fountains first, and always
found

An answering look to meet it. There he stood
In his rare manly beauty, but so changed!
"Edith, is your love dead?"

"Dead, Rudolph." "Then
I also die, but bless thee for the past, —
I bless thee now and ever, dearest one,
For what that love once brought me;" and he
fell

Before her, as men fall when stricken low
By sword or pestilence or lightning's blast.
She knelt beside him, and her eyes grew dim
At such a sight! — a ghastly wound and
blood —

His life-blood flowing thus! Why, she would
give

Her own not to have said the cruel word;
But yet she had no right to love him now.
Was he not faithless? Was he not her foe?

Her country's enemy? She must not love.
But she was human, and she must be kind.
And summoning her maidens, soft they bore
Him safe within the mansion; on her breast
His head lay pillowed as they raised him up;
And not a sign of life, but blood was there.
From Pennsylvania's gory field he rushed,
Wounded and sick, and weary with the sight
Of carnage and destruction, to behold
Once more, ere he should die, the angel face
Of her whose love was more to him than life.
For many days and weary nights of pain
He lay, unconscious of the tender care
That watched untiring o'er his quivering frame.
No vulgar touch came near, no grating voice
Disturbed his slumber; when he slept, she tried
To rest, but never left him for an hour.
At last the morning came when this long sleep,
So like death's slumber, ended; he awoke
And looked up, like a child, to the old nurse
Who stood beside her darling in her grief, —
For Edith was an orphan, and to her
The dear old Mabel was a mother kind.
Brothers and sisters were within her home,
And she had guarded well their tender youth;
And Mabel guarded all.

She called her child.

“He will not die of this wound, but he ought,
For Yankee blood is base, and ought to run
Like water on the soil they want for gain.”

“Hush, Mabel! Let me go to him myself,
And I can tell him all your wishes kind.”

She stood by him once more. “Edith,” he
said,

“I dreamed an angel stood by me and prayed;
I thought it looked like you, and vanished thus,
As you did, and your love from out my life,
But was not false, as you were.”

“I was false!

And thus you mock me! You, whose name to
me

Was only next to God's, — such reverence
I bore it! When I looked into your face,
I saw no trace of grossness or of sin;
There was a purity in eye and brow,
A majesty of thought in every tone.

Oh, Rudolph, when I heard that you had named
My fair name lightly, and had cursed your soul
With lying words, and subterfuges mean,
Methought the earth should swallow up such
deeds,

Nor suffer anything so vile to live!

Of all her weary children, sure was I
Most wretched and abandoned and forlorn.
But God came to me, and He gave me peace.
And now I only want to be at rest."

"But, Edith, you have listened to a lie!
You have been duped as I have; some foul
tongue

Has, from the lower darkness, come to blast
And enter thus our Eden, as of old.

Ah, we were all too blessed for this earth!
Such 'great joys do not last'; but by that past,
And by the future life, which seems so clear,
By that strong faith you ever held in Heaven,
I charge you hear me now! for I was told
You turned in haughty scorn from love like
mine!

Aye, trampled in the dust my country's flag,
And vowed that never blood of yours and mine
Should mingle, save in deadly strife and hate!
Aye, more; that you were wedded, and your
spouse

Came from Virginia's 'sacred soil,' to bear
The fairest of her daughters hence a bride!
I could not choose but think that this was true,
And gave my soul to folly and to sin.
I madly plunged in pleasure, till my brain

Grew drunk and dizzy with the awful stench
Of natures coarse and grovelling ; and my
heart

Was sick and weary with this sinful life.

I longed for death, which came not ; in the
field

I have implored of Heaven this only boon, —
That some more worthy life be spared than
mine,

And I would expiate my errors thus !

Then I was wounded : first, I thought of you,

And longed for one last look upon that face

Which made for me all that I knew of heaven !

Oh, Edith, darling ! I have loved you well !

But you are high above me, and I go

Once more to fight under the dear old flag,

And give all that I am to this great cause.

Remember me at evening in your prayers ;

And I will look at evening at the stars

And think of you, my only, dearest love.”

‘ Think, Rudolph, of the God whose love can
be

More than mine ever was. I must be true

To you at this last meeting. I shall give

No false interpretation to my life,

Whose lesson is, that love is not for me.

I've seen the whole of it; the verdict is,
'All, all is vanity.' A woman's heart
Is but a toy men play with, and forget
When a new toy approaches; you believe
Yourself sincere, and when the next new face
That pleases you appears, you will be found
Making the same low homage as to mine.
I risked my all on one false stake, and failed:
I have no more to give! I want no more!"
"Then perish every memory of the past!
I will be true, as ever, to myself,
And from this hour give no vain wishes room.
Give me my sword and belt, my warrior's plume;
I thank you for your keeping: let me go!
And find in manly forms a human heart;
For, but you are a woman, I would swear
You had a mailed thing within your breast
Where one would seek a heart. Away! away!
My best of life was given to your charge,
And you betrayed that keeping. I am strong
And proud now, to defy you to the last.
And when I die, — mark, Edith, — you will
 come,
And lay that proud head trembling in the dust,
At thought of this sad hour. You love me
 now:

You dare not tell me nay ; you have no power
To tear your soul from mine ! And now fare-
well

To your proud Southern coldness and disdain.
Give to me rather, from the rugged North,
A soul to know and battle for the truth,
And to be faithful to a loving heart.

I leave you now to precious dreams of peace !
You yet shall feel that I was brave and true,
And never treacherous to friend or foe."

"But you are ill. You cannot leave us thus !
You will not — cannot." "Yes I can, and
will !"

He rose and staggered ; then she came and
laid

Her hand upon his head, and touched his brow
With the soft touch he knew so well of yore.

"I bless thee, oh God bless thee, my beloved !"
He murmured, turned, and held her to his
heart.

And she made answer slowly through her
tears :

"Gently, oh gently, precious friend and true,
Touch with the hand of love this weary
heart ;

Tenderly look and truly on the grief
Which dies before this healing breath of love.
Aye, fold me warm, close, closer to thy heart,
For I am cold and sick : thus let me die !
In this great stillness, with thy heart and mine
Throbbing together, there is naught beyond
But heaven, and that were wanting, wanting,
thee

My soul answers to thine, as deep to deep ;
And resting thus, beloved, on thy heart,
All sorrow dies. There is no heaven but love.
God's great, eternal fulness gives no more.
He dwells engirdled with love's holy flame,
And needs no mortal, for Himself is all.
But we need one another, dearest love :
Thy soul is wandering in a dreary maze
Apart from me ; and mine is desolate,
Most desolate, without thee. Life and death,
All forms, all things that have been and that
are,

Have harmony and beauty by this test,
Or lose all. Darling, I am sick for thee !
I want thee always ; miss thee everywhere.
Think of the hours when love was ecstasy ;
When thoughts as pure as angel's fancies came
Straight from thy soul to mine ; when, with a
look.

Thou couldst control and bring me close to
thee.

When looking thus into my very soul,
I could not choose but follow when thou wouldst.

‘The nearest nearness’ only satisfies,
And words are vain from me to thee, beloved.
The past comes o’er me as a dream of heaven,
And thy soft words of blessing thrill me through
With rapture. Without guile our friendship
seemed,

So full, so pure, so high above the thing
The world calls love; so consecrate to good,
So full of noble aim and high resolve.
Looking at both worlds in the light of love,
And striving bravely for the right, we two,
As two strong oaks aspiring to the sky,
Roots intertwining, branches reaching out
Like arms imploring love,—imploring Heaven,
Had been like Titans, strong to do and dare
And to withstand the aggravated wiles
Of the dark spirit in his wildest hour,
When human souls are shivering in his grasp,
And God and Satan strive for mastery.
Together thus we had the power to stand.
That friendship — it was godlike! Not a stain
Of earth could touch it; not a human foot

Could come within a circle hallowed thus :
It was a demon's cold and stony glare
That rushed unbidden to this holy shrine,
And tried, with slander's breath, to dash it
out."

" But ah, it could not. Give me but this hope,
That thou art true, and wilt be ever strong
In trust and loyalty to me, and then
I shall be blessed and secure in thee."
His hands upon her brow were folded now
In solemn benediction ; and his lips
Rested on hers, in perfect truth and love.

The compact thus was sealed. That holy vow,
Made first in Paradise, but never yet
Suffered, in rich completeness, to unfold
To full fruition, since the woful day
When, with a sword of flame, the angel stood
At Eden's gate, and banished out of sight
The first and purest lovers earth has known.
Still, visions of that blissful destiny,
Faint glimpses of its power, come to us,
As from an angel's wing, to brood a while,
A little while, and then, behold ! we stand
In shivering darkness and in dread amaze
That we grasp nothing but a phantom dim !

A few short days, such as make up a life,
 And he was strong, and ready for the fight.
 Ah, what were sadder than this parting day!
 Such lovers, with a destiny so dark!
 Her country's cause lay heavy on her heart.
 Her lover's life was dearer still than this.
 She could not speak her grief, but love saw all.
 "Be comforted, my darling, and take heart;
 A soldier's wife must learn to smile at death,
 And you will be my wife when next we meet."
 "Rudolph, your precious life — my country's
 cause —

I give to God's great keeping; and to you
 I give this solemn charge: if ever time
 Or chance or circumstance give you the power
 To do a deed of mercy for the sons
 Of that brave land of mine, let not your heart
 Withhold such blessing. May the holy Christ
 So deal with you as you be true to this."

"I promise. Now God bless thee!" One
 long kiss,

One close embrace, heart throbbing against
 heart,

And he was gone!

.

A soldier, grim and gory from the field,

Dashed swiftly up the stately avenue,
His war-horse panting and himself hard pressed.
He asked for Edith Brantley, and bowed low
In graceful homage to a face so fair.
“Your pardon, gentle lady, for this haste.
I come to bear a package from a friend, —
My country’s enemy, — but on my heart
The memory of his friendship dwells for aye !
‘Passing the love of woman’ was the love
I bore this brave companion of my youth,
When we together learned the art of war, —
Together slept beneath the moon’s pale light,
Where Hudson’s fairest waters lave the earth,
And rocks and hills and river mingle there
All richest forms of beauty and of strength.
From Alabama’s sunny plains I came,
To serve my country in her throes of pain.
I met him in the thickest fight — a foe !
I risk my life for love of him to bring
This little package ; it will tell you all.”
He trembled as he laid within her hand
The sacred charge, and brushed away a tear ;
Then bowing low, scarce uttered an adieu,
And, dashing o’er the lawn, was out of sight.
She, gazing on a letter stained with blood ;
A long, dark tress, folded with loving care ;

A short, light curl ; and with it these soft
words :

“ There ’s nothing in my soul but love for thee.
Edith ! may God be gracious unto thee !
Farewell ! ”

Official tidings from the seat of war :

“ Killed — General Rudolph Barton. He was
brave,

And foremost in the struggle ; and he stood
Bareheaded, while his country’s battle-cry
Rolled from his voice like thunder : ‘ On, my
men !

Strike well for Freedom and the grand old flag,
And follow me to glory ! ’ Thus he fell ! ”



LITTLE EFFIE.

A FAIRY child !
A winsome child !

Running in glee the meadows all over
After the bee, the cowslip, and clover ;
Taking the little dog up in her arms,
Kissing the little mouse : freighted with charms
Was the dear, happy child !
The wise, loving child !

Loving all beautiful things without measure ;
Taking in natural things such rare pleasure ;
Looking at falsehood with vision so keen ;
Scorning the frivolous, hating the mean ;
The dear, happy child !
The wise, loving child !

Looking at nature as lovers are prone to ;
Looking at life as though something there
shone to

Her spirit, and lifted her highly above us ;
Faithful, though, always to bless and to love us ;
 The dear, happy child !
 The wise, loving child !

Earnest and strong, with a heart ever tender ;
Gifted with genius amounting to splendor ;
Taking God's world, as it looked to her, kindly,
Loving God's creatures nobly, not blindly ; —
 The dear, happy child !
 The wise, loving child !

On the bleak shore, where the wild ocean rages,
Plunging in glee despite warnings of sages ;
Safe in God's world ; never seeming to borrow
Aught that could bring either danger or sorrow.
 The dear, happy child !
 The wise, loving child !

Prattling her sweet little fancies in numbers ;
Taking bright fairy tales up to her slumbers ;
Making her home a vision of lightness,
Brothers and sisters alive with her brightness ; —
 The dear, happy child !
 The wise, loving child !

Looking to God with the soul of an angel ;
Taking, in meekness, his holy Evangel
Home to her heart, and learning so surely
What His own Spirit was teaching her purely ;—
The dear, happy child !
The wise, loving child !

White rose and lily, and pale heather-blossom, —
Spring's choicest emblems, — lay soft on her
bosom ;
Under God's holy and solemn protection,
Leave her with these till the great Resurrection.
The dear, happy child !
The wise, loving child !
Ah me !



WHAT ARE YOU?

WHAT are you, you little elfin thing?

Are you a bird just on the wing?

What do you mean by flitting about

This way and that way, in and out?

Are you a rope-dancer, balancing there

Your tiny form in the ambient air?

What if you tumble? You never do, —

But your antics shiver me through and through.

Are you a fairy? for you seem,

Both when you wake and when you dream,

To be kin to the lilies, and bear the perfume

Of all that is lovely, to cheer our gloom.

Are you an angel? That is the word.

Lifted on high by the smile of the Lord!

You 've the right place now, for you never
were still

Till you spread your wings for the holy hill!

LOST!

LOST! lost! lost!

Aye, will ye count the cost?
Rubies and pearls are light in the scale,
Diamonds mount up; all your sciences fail
To measure the depth and the height
Of what in a single night
Befell me when tempest-tossed!

It was dark, and I had no light
But this treasure, 't was pure and bright;
I clung to it madly; 't was all I had
In that perilous hour to make me glad;
And I prayed to the God of Love
For a token from heaven above,
To say to me, All is right!

Oh God! how I struggled and wept!
And in my heart's holiest kept
The truth that was nearest me night and day, —
The faith that was part of me, for it lay

Close to my faith in God,
In the path by suffering trod,
For I neither slumbered nor slept.

A voice from the mighty deep
Said, Take your rest and sleep.

There is no more need for anxious thought,
There is no more heed for treasure bought
At such a price of blood.
From Creation — from the Flood —
It is woman's lot to weep.

I gather up what remains
Of the fruit of my toil and pains.
It is of a great want my life is full,
It is of a deep pain my heart is dull.
And I look to the Great Elsewhere
For my treasure, — 't is guarded there,
But never on earthly plains !

It was well worth all I gave ;
It was mighty in power to save ;
It came to me freely, as sun and air,
Like God's Redemption from despair !
And the Cross is on my brow
From its glory, even now,
And this is all I have !

Lost ! lost ! Not lost !
No, for it wellnigh cost
The price of a soul ! Can ye know the worth
Of that which the Saviour, when on earth,
Said, Tell me out the sum
To sinners stricken dumb ? —
Well, then, ye may count the cost !



“ DOODIE.”

“ Of such is the kingdom of Heaven.”

LILIES, rosés, pansies, all
Round her in a cluster ;
Playthings, dolls, and books, and fruit,
All that love could muster

On her left, the baby-house,
Filled with many a treasure ;
Friends, in troops, rejoiced to bring,
So to give her pleasure.

On her right, the blessed cross ;
In her front, the Saviour,
Whom she loved and trusted long
With such sweet behavior.

At her head, a lovely child, —
Once her darling sister, —
Waiting now at glory's gate, —
One who sadly missed her !

On her brow a holy calm,
Not of earth's belonging ;
On her lips a blessed psalm ;
Round her, angels thronging !

From the fields of amaranth,
From the noontide splendor
Of the immortal hills of joy,
More than tongue can render !

Where the living waters flow,
Ever, ever springing ;
O'er the rose and asphodel
Heavenly freshness flinging !

From the mansions of the Lord
Come this choir immortal,
In their hands to bear her up
Through the golden portal.

Hush ! the room is holy ground !
Breathe no sound of mourning ;
Lulled to sleep, she wakes no more
Till the Eternal dawning.

AHMEDE.

“One word with two meanings is the traitor’s shield and shaft: and a slit tongue be his blazon.” — CAUCASIAN PROVERB.

IT is the middle of leafy June.
The winds sigh lonely a mournful tune;
The birds grow silent; the sunlight falls
Coldly, as if through dismal halls.
A maiden walks to a holy tryst;
She walks in the sunlight, it turns to mist.
She is fair, she is pure, the lovely child:
Seventeen summers soft and mild
Have touched her brow with a nameless charm;
Then child meets woman without alarm.
She surely comes of a noble race;
Her mother’s look is in her face,
Barring the pride; and her soft, dark eye
Is strangely bright: not earth, nor sky,
Nor anything but love, has given
This tender light — so much like heaven!

To the tryst of love, oh maiden fair,
Child of beauty, beware ! beware !
“ Is thy lover noble and brave and true ?
Would he die for truth, for God, for you ? ”
“ Oh yes ; on his brow you may read the sign,
So pure and good is this lover of mine.”
“ Oh maiden, see, the sunshine ’s cold,
The birds are dumb, and dark is the wold ;
The skies are drooping, the heavy air
Broods o’er the landscape like despair ! ”
“ Away, away ! I will rejoice ;
I go to the trysting, I ’ll hear his voice.
Let Nature droop, and for me, for me
Is youth and love by the Linden-tree.”

Under the Linden a manly form
Stands like the oak amid the storm.
He looks like Apollo, half divine ;
On his brow the gods have left their sign
Of purity, nobleness, strength, and truth.
Just past the sunny time of youth,
The glory of manhood is on his brow,
The strength of heroes is with him now.
She comes, his beloved, a fairy thing,
With her dark bright hair like the raven’s wing.
He touches her brow, he touches her hair

With a soft, light touch like the summer air.
Her hand is held with a stronger hold,
The strength of a love that cannot grow cold.
“Ahmede, beloved, you are sad,
You, — and my heart is only glad.
Do I not give you enough of love ?
Speak, what ails my drooping dove ? ”
He drew her close to his throbbing heart,
And she nestled there, as if naught could part
Or draw her from this blissful rest.
No word or sound, but on his breast
She clung, as if all earth and heaven
Were there, and no more could be given ;
When she lifted her head, a holy kiss
He gave and blessed her for love like this !

.

Sir Roderick came from over the sea,
Oh, he was proud as proud could be !
He came with his sword and he came with his
gun,
For lo ! there was fighting to be done !
And he was at home in the battle's roar.
His brave steed stands at the mansion-door ;
He paws the dust, he snuffs the wind,
His master lingers too long behind.

Sir Roderick stays in the maple grove
For his cousin, to whom he would pledge his
love.

“Ahmede, sweet cousin, I fain must go
To where Virginia’s waters flow ;
Where her fertile plains are dark with the
blood

Of heroes, who have to death withstood
The proud, rebellious sin that lies,
Like some foul thing, ’neath Southern skies.

Farewell ! Remember that long ago
The troth was plighted, ’mid direst woe,
For thee and me, by thy sire and mine.
My father lives, but the loss was thine.

Thy father left me this legacy ;

I claim its surety, sweet, from thee.

Pledge me in honor, pledge me in love.

Adieu ! One kiss. By the gods above !

What ails the girl ? ” Proudly she raised
Her lovely head ; he stood amazed !

“ Sir Roderick, lo ! your good steed waits,
Fretfully chafing, delay he hates.

No plighted troth is mine to give ;

Your sire and mine had it not, believe.

No man can touch my lips in truth

But the chosen lover of my youth ;

Purely I stand by your side this day ;
No man has done it, — no man may.”
He bit his lip, he mounted his steed,
And rushed o’er the lawn with an arrow’s
 speed.

“ She loves another, by Jove, I swear !
She shall rue the day : she is passing fair ;
She loves him well. Ah, now I descry, —
’Tis the Poet pale, with the dark blue eye.
I ’ll fight him. No : I ’ll let him see
That the game is false ; she can never be
His bride ! What ! marry a Yankee churl !
Ahmede — the grandchild of an Earl ?
She is fair, she is rich, she is proud ; in sooth,
I want her beauty, her lands, her youth.

.

Potomac’s waters flow soft and wide
By the homes of the South in their stately
 pride,
And the noble shores of Maryland
To Virginia’s hills stretch forth the hand.
Ahmede Trevyllian had her birth
In this lovely portion of God’s fair earth ;
And she loved the river and loved the shore,
And the hills and rocks, as o’er and o’er

She studied their beauty, and felt the spell
Of a weird-like something. Who can tell
What wonders lie in the heart of a girl ?
What thoughts, what fancies, pure as the
pearl

From ocean's depths ; when her soul awakes
To the first touch of love, and simply takes
Her place with her peers, and looks to see
The meaning of life's great mystery.
Ah yes, these shores to her heart were dear,
For love's first whisper caught her ear
In the shade of the oaks that so proudly stand,
And her baby voice said, " Maryland."

Her father had left his home of pride
In his days of youth, with a fair young bride.
He came to the New World a home to seek ;
And where the noble Chesapeake
Throws her beauty from shore to shore,
Till she washes the feet of Baltimore,
He found a home, where his heart could rest ;
And the lovely city's lofty crest
Greeted the eye, by night and morn,
From the stately home where Ahmede was
born.

Her poet-lover dwelt within

The city's turmoil and woe and sin.
He had given his soul to do and dare,
And take in human woes a share ;
No suffering heart to him in vain
Pleaded ; for at the cry of pain
He rose like a god, and gave to grief
Whatever he had, to bring relief.

Now at that city's temple-door
Knocked the remorseless god of war ;
Misery walked a familiar thing.
Oh, let another minstrel sing
How she writhed and groaned, that city fair,
'Neath the iron rule, in her despair !
Home of my childhood ! never can be
More heart-wrung tears than I give to thee !
Thy maidens so fair, thy sons so brave,
Who kneel in prayer, who rush to the grave ;
From hill to hill, from shore to shore,
A wail goes up for Baltimore !
And Maryland waits till God shall speak,
Be free, proud land of the Chesapeake !

.

Sir Roderick straight to the poet's home
Wended his way ; and the fretted dome
Of his library told, and the sculptures there,

And art's pure models so brave and fair
From every clime, a token and grace
How rich was the poet's dwelling-place.

A traitor's soul has never a mate
In the mind of a nature simple and great.
A lie goes straight to his heart like steel ;
He cannot intrigue, he can only feel.
The lie went home when Sir Roderick told
His cousin had sold herself for gold.
She had no heart ; girls do not have ;
She had laughed in scorn that she ever gave
A thought to a poet whose love could be
No match for the rank of nobility.
He would take her home to his English isle,
And with honors and grandeur her time beguile.

Herbert Godolphin looked aghast ;
His hand across his brow he passed,
As if to shut out all the sun ;
Then softly murmured, " Thy will be done."
Many a weary day has passed
Since Ahmede Trevyllian looked her last
On the face that was dearest of all on earth.
She could not doubt the matchless worth
Of him she had worshipped with love so vain ;

She said, "Time will bring him back again."
But she faded and drooped from day to day;
Weak heart of woman, — ah, welladay!

War's loud trumpet was in the land;
War's foul deeds went hand in hand
With murder and rapine and lust and pride;
While hero-souls fought side by side,
And fools in high places laughed to see
The end of long-hated chivalry.

Herbert Godolphin stood in the van
With Nature's nobles, an honest man.
A holy, patient, and godlike zeal
Gave him to duty through woe and weal.
By the bed of death, in the battle's din,
He labored and loved; no form of sin,
No suffering, took from his heart the power
To help and to pray. When storm-clouds
 lower,
God's agents stand strongest: the camp of fire
About them lifts all true souls higher.
A surgeon's skill he had sought and found;
By day and night on the battle-ground
He walked and watched, and gave in faith
The promises holy that conquer death.

Where Shenandoah's waters pour
In Potomac's lap a golden shower,
And mountains high and boulders rise,
Like Titans struggling to the skies,
And rocks cleft grandly from peak to base,
As though Jove's thunderbolts from their place
Were hurled from high Olympus down,
And dashed in pieces by Zeus' frown!
Making the panting, wondering earth
Aghast at whether in anger or mirth,
In sport or fury, the gods had come
With terror to strike a nation dumb!
But whether in pleasure, or whether in wrath,
Where immortals tread is a glorious path;
And strength and beauty and grandeur are found
On Harper's Ferry's sacred ground.
Sacred! The blood of a noble race
Has flowed like her waters for tyrants base.
Sacred! Each rood of her reeking soil
Is crying for vengeance; her children toil,
And strive and cry, in their bitter pain,
For homes made desolate, brave ones slain.
Antietam's plains send forth a dirge
For the day when a merciless human surge
Rolled darkly and wildly, rank upon rank
Rolled through the valley, rear and flank;

Brother 'gainst brother ! hate for hate !
Oh God ! is this Freedom, or is it Fate ?

In the front of the fight that raged that day,
Sir Roderick Trevyllian kept at bay
A host, it seemed, of warriors proud.
He fought for fame ; but his head was bowed
When the Black Horse Cavalry, fresh and
strong,
Surged with their Stewart proudly along,
With nodding plume, at stately pace, —
God send the Briton an hour of grace !
He falls, as the wicked, to rise no more ;
And his men in sorrow their leader bore
Away from the carnage, soon meet for the
grave ;
They honored him though as men honor the
brave.

The battle was over, the day was done ;
The lingering rays of the setting sun
Threw o'er the landscape a dreamy light ;
The skies looked down from their starry height
On the saddest sight, — that verdant plain
So red with the blood of brave men slain.

Herbert Godolphin was there that day ;
Where the fight was thickest his duty lay ;
O'er the deserted battle-field
He walked like an angel ; the good old shield
Of faith to guard him, and on his brow
A halo of glory. No grief could bow
That lofty soul ; for his mission pure
Was settled ; his watchword high — endure.

Near the foot of a spreading oak,
Where no sounds but Nature's the stillness
broke,
A man lay gasping in loneliness ;
Herbert was near to this deep distress.
“ Water, for Christ's sake ! ” he heard him
say,
And his steps were turned where the dying lay.
Sir Roderick, his rival, could it be ?
So gay, so proud, when coldly he
Had crushed from his heart the love of youth,
Dashed the rich wine without care or ruth !
The dying man with a heavy groan
Lifted his eyes, and they glared like stone
On the noble heart, so sorely tried :
“ Ahmede,” he murmured, “ my Southern
bride,

She loved me not ; but to you was given
That love which was more to me than heaven !
I wronged you both ; with my dying breath
I take back the lie. When cold in death
My body lies, oh send it, pray,
To the home of my childhood, far away !
On England's soil may my dust repose.
And when this rebellion draws to a close,
Let my name stand fairly, as heroes' should ;
I have cancelled my sins with my heart's best
blood."

" No sins are cancelled thus, I trow ;
The sacrifice offered was long ago.
Jerusalem's hills still echo the groan
Of Him who on Calvary did atone
For sins of every grade and hue.
Sir Roderick, what you have to do
Is, trust in that sacrifice, freely given,
In that is your only way to heaven."
Then in the silent evening air
Went up from pale lips a holy prayer.
God save the soul that is struggling here ;
God help the sinner, with no help near !
The petted heir of a noble race
Thus breathed out his life in a desert place ;
And the heart of his helper waxed sad and full

As Sir Roderick prayed, "God be merciful!"
Sadly, oh sadly, through copse and grove,
Herbert looked down upon hearts that love.
Sisters with arms twined round the dead;
Lovers holding a sainted head;
Fair young girls drenched with gore that came
From hearts that oozed out 'mid glory's flame;
Mothers seeking young heroes given,
In the flower of youth, straight up to heaven.
Oh, shades of the blessed! can ye know
The throes of your country, in ashes and woe,
For she writhes in the furnace with anguish
wild, —
"Woe to the nation whose king is a child!"

Mount Vernon wails for the noble dead,
And the home of Clay is with cowards bestead;
Proud Arlington mourns her lofty state,
For her halls and groves are desolate.
Our race of heroes has passed away.

My story lingers. My hero goes
From this scene of horrors and mortal woes
To a peaceful home in Maryland.
Potomac's waters still flow as grand,
Still unsullied by human strife and gore;

But the wail goes up forevermore
From her plains in their beauty, her hills in
 their pride,
That have nurtured heroes, who nobly died
For what they believed was the cause of truth !
From the rich, brave hearts of struggling youth
These shores are bathed with a purple flood,
The chrism of Freedom, baptized in blood.
There is no remission without this price ;
The blood of martyrs is hallowed thrice :
In the church, in the world, this precious
 leaven
Rises and purges high natures for heaven !

.

Ahmede lay sleeping beneath the flowers
That trailed o'er one of the loveliest bowers
Of Southern soil and breezes born.
A dreamy sleep ! How pale and worn
The frail child looked ; a gentle sigh
Escaped, and a tear from her deep, dark eye ;
And she murmured in sleep, " Oh love, how
 long ?
Herbert, beloved ! " Then a song
From a wild bird's throat entranced the air.

It woke her. Who was kneeling there ?
Herbert ! No words. The patient love
Had borne and conquered ; heaven above
Looked down and blessed the faithful pair
As they knelt together in fervent prayer.



LINES

WRITTEN AT BALTIMORE ON THE DEFEAT OF HENRY CLAY.

IS it so? Has America dared to proclaim
From her Capitol's height the inglorious
name

Of one whose rare excellence lies, to be sure,
In the unenvied virtue of being obscure?

Has America done this? We hail then no
more

The spirit that breathed in our fathers of yore;
For Virtue and Freedom they struggled and
bled,

But Virtue's dishonored, and Freedom lies
dead!

Oh shame to my country! thus ingrate to one
Whose course in time's pathway has been like
the sun;

Increasing in splendor the higher it rose,
And excelling in glory the nearer its close.

Alone and unrivalled, the land of his birth
Might hail him as peer with the greatest of
earth ;

But his country, unworthy, dishonors her trust,
And her proud-spreading Eagle lies low in the
dust !

But no ; there are millions whose hearts would
rejoice

In the glorious sway of the chief of their choice ;
The love which they bear him would lead them
to death,

And will more than atone for the pestilent
breath

Of slanders as foul as the spirits that came
From the blackness of darkness to tarnish his
fame ;

Let the abject revile him, he still may depend
On American hearts, — they 'll be true to the
end.

No place can exalt him : his virtues alone
An eminence prouder than temple or throne
Impart to his genius, — a lustre so pure,
That monarchs might envy, yet fail to secure.

He will live in the hearts of the good and the
brave,
And the grief of a nation shall hallow his
grave ;
And our annals forever in brightness display
The unsullied name of our own Henry Clay !



“SUSPIRIA DE PROFUNDIS.”

FATHER, the way is dark !
Groping, I cannot find Thee, and
my soul
Is stifled in this grief beyond control ;
I long to be at rest.

Speak to me, gracious Lord !
I suffer, being human, and I fear
Because I loved Thee, tried to feel Thee near,
And I, alas ! have failed.

I could not find the way ;
Falsehood and treason compassed me about,
And, like a child, I struggled and cried out, —
“ God, help me, or I die ! ”

The trial 's long and fierce ;
Each sense and nerve straining to agony,
It clutches me at midnight, like a fiend,
And dies not with the day !

Thou madest me and mine ;
In Thy hands are the corners of the earth,
The strength of hills, the power of human birth,
And Thine the strength of Love !

It bathes the earth in balm ;
Its glory, in the sunshine and the flower,
Cometh to happy hearts, a gentle shower,
Like early morning dew.

But I am not as they :
Thou gavest me a nature strong and brave ;
I wanted all, or nothing ; and I gave
My soul to find this out, —

This fearful mystery
Of life and its deep yearnings, and to see
The meaning of its mortal agony, —
And I am still and blind !

Still in this mighty grief
Thy hand is laid upon me, and I bow
Meekly, because I know that only Thou
Couldst chasten thus to save !

I have been proud and wild ;
Wayward and foolish. I would speak to Thee,

Because I know that this great mystery
Is Thine, — and I am too.

Give me a little room
To breathe and to approach Thee, for I feel
That earth is harder than the tempered steel,
And has no place for me.

Like a lost child I stood,
Looking out in the darkness, as to find
Something to show me that among my kind
I was not desolate.

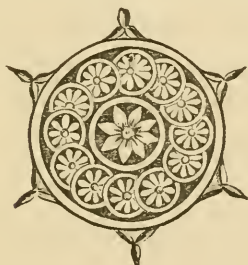
No sound or comfort there !
The voices that have soothed me are asleep,
Or walking streets of glory, and I weep
Because they answer not.

Thou art the same through all ;
Thou, holding earth and heaven, couldst not
come
To a weak woman's wailing, smothered dumb
With anguish like a pall.

Oh ! weak and sinful heart !
To whom Christ cometh with no earthly sign ;

But, bearing high the cross and life divine,
Says, "Take, and learn of me."

"Learn what the lilies say ;
Take the mild yoke of patience, and be true ;
Weary and heavy-laden, unto you
Christ giveth heavenly rest."



LITTLE ADDIE.

WITHIN a pleasant Southern home
Was seen a little maid
Busily gathering summer flowers
Beneath the fig-tree's shade.

Merrily she ran along
The pleasant garden-walk,
Singing a low, sweet, childish song,
Mingled with pretty talk.

She took her little bonnet off
And threw it on the ground,
And then herself curled up beside,
Looked wonderingly around.

Thus rang her low and lovely voice,
Which lingers in my ears
Like music faintly borne to earth
From higher, happier spheres :

“ My mother says there is a land
So very far away
That it is hard to find the road ;
And we must ever pray

“ Our blessed Lord, who always keeps
His little lambs from harm,
That He will lead us safe along
With His almighty arm.

“ I think it must be very dark
Along that lonesome road ;
And mother says she 's very tired
And cold, — and she is good.

“ She says that she has tried to walk
This narrow, rugged way ;
That God is good, and means to turn
Its darkness into day.

“ I wonder if such flowers grow
In that fair land above
As these, — they are so pretty, and
Their fragrance so I love !

“ I 'll ask my mother : I should like
To go there, if 't is true

That little children have a home,
And flowers, and waters blue."

A few short years, and Addie laid
Her listless, weary head,
In anguish great and torturing,
Upon a dying-bed.

God's love ! how seemed it then and where ?
That such a radiant child
By months of suffering must atone, —
For what ? — so undefiled.

So strong, so true : a noble child
Of a most noble race ! —
Grace, Genius, Beauty, — thirteen years, —
All this, and leave no trace ?

To pass away, at this fair age,
In torture to the last,
And leave behind a broken heart,
A household overcast !

Oh God ! is this the end of all ?
Must woman weep and wail,
And travail to the death, then see
Her fruit and flower fail ?

Was this the end ? That fairy child
Torn thus from earth away, —
So young to bear the heavy cross
Of anguish and dismay ?

This, oh not this : that little head
Was laid in weakness down,
Just as the solemn angel came
With glory and with crown ;

And the last song she sang on earth
Among our little band
Was, "Round the throne of God in heaven
A thousand children stand."

"Addie, God wants you home ; you know
You'll be no stranger there ;
Lift up your heart to Christ the Lord,
In fervent, humble prayer."

In meekness bowed the gentle head, —
"The river's dark, my child ;
Upon the verge I stand with you,
But Christ will walk beside !"

"Is He still with you, Addie, — say ?"
A heavenly answer told

The mother's heart that all was right, —
Her lamb was in the fold !

Thus came the Angel of the Lord,
With gentle hand and kind,
And took the child so tenderly,
He left no sting behind.



“RETURN UNTO THY REST, OH MY
SOUL!”

TOO long, oh soul of mine, too vainly wandering,

Laying on earthly altars thy soul's trust ;
Too sadly, in thy wild devotion, squandering
Immortal treasure on frail things of dust !

Come back, oh restless one, and let the teaching
That sorrow brings thee find its holy aim ;
God's plan to save thee read, too far out-
reaching
Thy puny thought His providence to blame.

Thou hast not turned thee, mocking, from thy
Saviour,
Nor on the hallowed cross laid hands of
pride ;
Nor, self-exalting in thy vain behavior,
Withheld due worship from the Crucified.

No, none of these ; yet hast thou idly given
To earth too much, and found too little there.
Youth, Hope, and Love ! — where are they ?
thou hast striven
Vainly, proud heart ! earth flings thee back
Despair.

Now gather up the fragments of thy being,
And bring the offering to the only Truth ;
Not fresh and whole, before the great All-
Seeing,
Thou comest now as in thy early youth.

No, thou canst never find the scattered treasures
That in the wilderness lie all unblest ;
But human guilt true penitence outmeasures :
Return then, weary spirit, to thy Rest !



LINES

ON THE DEATH OF J. L. C.

AYE, bear him gently to his rest,
Bury him from your sight ;
But lay upon his tranquil breast
An emblem pure and bright.

For genius dwelt within the clay
Ye reverently tend ;
And to his worth this tribute comes,
The offering of a friend.

I knew him well in other years,
And other scenes than these ;
And his sad exit brings a flood
Of gushing sympathies.

Oh where are now the gifted few
Who, in his youthful days,
Together toiled for honor's meed,
And woman's dearer praise ?

Some in high places take the palm
To highest merit given ;
Some scattered o'er the weary earth,
And some at rest in Heaven !

Oh, let the dirge be soft and low
That mourns his early doom ;
And gently bear the stranger forth
Unto his lonely tomb.

Bury him where the sunbeams lie,
And pale wild flowers bloom,
That both may clamber where at last
The exile found a tomb.

His early life was nurtured near
The spot that saw its close ;
'T was fitting there the wanderer
Should find his last repose.

No home had he on earth beside, —
No household-fires for him ;
A lonely man he lived and died ;
No hearth his loss will dim.

But though no mother's tears shall fall
Over the early dead,

No father's manly grief burst forth
For worth and genius fled, —

A brilliant circle knew his youth
And early promise rare ;
They loved his purity and truth,
They 'll bless the kindly care

That in the far-off, sunny land,
Where noble hearts belong,
Found tears to give his memory,
As friendship gives a song.



SAUL AND JONATHAN.

MY father, here am I; what wouldst thou?"

"My son beloved, I would speak to thee
About the son of Jesse. Tell me now,
Wilt thou not quit this foolish fantasy,
This wild, fond yearning for a shepherd boy,
And take the state and dignity which is
Thine own inheritance? while he, forsooth,
Is but a lad, in poverty obscure!"

"My father, how can I forsake that which
Is part of me? My very heart and soul
Are one with him, — the chosen of my youth.
Can I forsake the feelings of my heart?
No more can I forsake my dearest friend."

"What seest thou, my son, in this poor youth
So great and noble, that thy heart can thus
Turn to him with a love so passionate, —
Passing the love of woman? Can it be
His ruddy countenance, his music, or
The strength wherewith he overcame and laid
The arrogant Philistine in the dust?"

Then answered Jonathan : “ My father, know,
Not for his lofty mien, nor art, nor deeds,
I love this man ; but for his ‘ noble self.’
The reason why I cannot tell ; but know
This much, that as I love my soul,
And next to God, I love this friend of mine.”
Then, on the brow of Israel’s monarch came
The shadow of a dark and fearful cloud :
“ My son, hast thou no wisdom ? Dost not
 know
That from thy brow this man will take the
 crown,
And king of Israel will reign supreme ? ”
The face of Jonathan grew strangely bright,
And, turning upwards his mild eyes, replied :
“ My father, let it be so : for behold,
We two have made a covenant, and the Lord
Is witness ; for before Him we have sworn
To stand together through life’s fitful storm.
What matter whether he or I reign ? I
Shall always be with him, and nearest too
Of all that live and breathe upon his smile.
I am to David as he is to me,
The best-beloved of a trusting heart.”
Then seized the king his messenger of wrath
To smite his son, — the cruel javelin ;

For in his soul he loved no human thing,
And in his household had no real friend.
From that cold presence wandered Jonathan,
And ate and drank not many days, because
His heart was saddened ; for his only friend
Was wandering and an outcast, turned away
From his companionship, and from the hopes
That friendship cherishes, divinely sweet.
Thus is it ever with the noblest love, —
Earth has no sympathy to give it room !



LAZARUS.

“Behold how He loved him.”

WHEN on the ear of majesty
From woman's heart was pealing
That cry of faith and agony,
Her earnest love revealing, —

Which to the distant Lord the word
A sister's love was sending, —
“Behold he whom Thou lovest lies
'Twixt life and death depending!”

The Lord so calmly heard that cry
That all who saw Him wondered
Why friendship did not rush to save
Such ties from being sundered.

But from His lips no message came, —
No useless word or feeling;
“For God's great glory this is done,
And God's shall be the healing.”

“ Lord ! ” from Judea’s daughter came
This wail to Jesus giving,
“ If Thou hadst been beside us then,
Our brother would be living.”

“ Martha, thy brother shall arise
From this unwonted sleeping : ”
“ I know, — the resurrection day,” —
Said Martha, sorely weeping.

“ I am the Resurrection ; ” “ I
Give life and death forever !
Believe in me, and from thy heart
No human ties can sever ! ”

When Mary came, and low before
Her Lord was prostrate lying,
“ If thou hadst come, O Lord, to save
My precious brother dying ! ”

Then o’er the angel-like repose
Of features more than human
A shadow passed, like grief, to see
The helpless grief of woman.

Tears from the Lord to friendship’s claim
Fell streaming o’er his creature,

And heavenly love for human grief
Illumined every feature.

Faith is so small in this low world,
And love so like delusion,
We grasp them feebly through the dark,
The noises, and confusion.

But Christ to woman's love was true,
And bountiful as tender ;
He gave not only godlike help,
With calm yet regal splendor,

But gave withal soft human tears,
And comfort as behooved him ;
And Jewish hearts in wonder thought,
" Behold how much he loved him ! "

Love, friendship ! these are growths too rare
On earthly soil to flourish ;
They wither in the chilling blast,
Or by the wayside perish.

But once the Lord with sanction high
Such holy ties approving,
To all true hearts this lesson gives, —
There 's nothing lost by loving.

THE SACRIFICE.

“I am the Resurrection and the Life!” — JOHN xi. 25.

THE light in the household fires was dim.
No sound — save a mother’s soft, low
hymn :

It rose and fell on the silent air ;
It rose, but disturbed not the sleeper there.
For within the verge of another land
That fair young child was about to stand.
Oh, look your last on the ringlets curled
In golden wreaths ; for now unfurled
Are the sails of that sure and steady bark
That shall bear, through the coldness and the
dark,

The sunshine from thy hearth away !
The one that is nearest thee : mother, pray !
Or thy heart will break as he hails the shore
With its wild, sad dirge of nevermore !
Oh for the tread of the little feet
That shall never more thy coming greet ;

Oh, for the rippling laugh whose flow
Was the sweetest music of long ago ;
Oh, for the radiant look of love
With the soft, blue tinge of the sky above !
Mother, the angels speak to thee ;
Pray for the soul about to be free !
Pray for thine own, as it gives to God
The noble boy, ere his feet have trod
The meagre ways of a selfish world !

Praise rather : let your song rise clear ;
No funeral dirge should the angels hear ;
But a song of triumph as they bear
The lovely burden through the air.
Be strong ! for the heart within thee breaking
Will shout with praise on its own awaking ;
Strong for thy boy then, give him to Heaven
Cheerfully ; though the chords be riven
Of deathless affection, let him rise,
A "free-will offering," to the skies !

Lo ! the Madonna hanging there,
Clasping her babe with the golden hair,
Would throw around thee the mighty spell
Wrought by the genius of Raffaele.
See ! in her eye is the Roman soul, —

The high, brave look of proud control ;
She holds the child with a queenly grace,
And a holy joy on her pure young face.
Look on her brow, and read me there
Earth's grief and love, but without the despair !

She lifts her eyes to that holy charm, —
The royal child on a maiden's arm, —
Which has borne to palace and hall and hearth
Its mission of peace, for the children of earth,
For ages that face of calm repose
Has brought a balm for human woes.
Now by the bed of death it beams,
Pure and holy as childhood's dreams ;
Now that mother remembers well
The story which Evangelists tell,
How Christ the Lord was, when a child,
Strong to suffer, yet undefiled !
How, when to manhood's glorious strength
The Babe from Bethlehem grew at length,
The torture came, the shame, the sword,
The cross that bore creation's Lord !
Now on her knees she bends to pray
Humbly, a life is fast ebbing away ;
She speaks to God, and the murmurs run, —
“ Not *my* will, but Thine be done ! ”

Thus as the tones of that lofty prayer
Rise through the mists to heaven's pure air,
The angels come and bear away
That spirit pure from its house of clay.
And the mother's heart, — oh, ask no more !
For her head was bared on the cold, hard floor ;
And she lay there wishing that God would
 come
From his high, great heaven, to call her home.
But words of friendship came instead :
“ Rise ! bear your burden and bury your dead,
And go your way, through this thorny life ;
For victory cometh after the strife ! ”



OVER THE SEA.

I SAY to my soul, Be strong,
For the journey is not long.
The storm-clouds roll and the billows roar ;
The breakers dash from shore to shore ;
While the winds sigh sadly, nevermore !
And this heart of mine echoes the sea.

The good bark has had her day.
With flag and pennant gay
She sailed when the sun rose bright and clear ;
She was nobly manned, and the hearty cheer
Of her crew was loud as they bade her steer
For the haven over the sea.

Now she labors ; she 's leaking fast !
Will she reach the shore at last ?
She is strained, stripped, battered, her colors
gone,
And her crew, — where are they ? Only one

Left in the darkness and cold alone !
And the rest are lost on the sea !

I say to my soul, Look above !
For the steady hand of love
Is guiding the bark with a promise sure
That she will not founder ; only endure,
And her lost, that were worthy and wise and
pure,
Will come again over the sea !



GOD'S CHILD, — NOT MINE.

“Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages.” — EXODUS ii. 9.

I TOOK the child and nursed it well ;
From my own bosom grew
The life of that fair life so bright,
Fresh as the morning dew.

God's child, — not mine. I never felt
That I had any claim
To radiant beauty such as that ;
'T was only mine in name.

We called him Harry ; it was well
For such a noble boy, —
Such manliness, such babiness,
Such overflowing joy !

His hearty laugh rang from the hills,
O'er Saratoga's vales ;

His golden hair was bright as corn .
Rippled by southern gales.

In Newport's ocean-girdled isle
His merry voice was heard ;
Taking old Ocean in his arms,
Playing, as we have heard

The Vikings did of old, who took
Hold of the mighty deep,
And played and laughed and conquered too,
Then lay them down to sleep.

Oft in the childhood nursery songs
His baby tones were heard ;
And " I can tarry but a night " —
His first connected word.

O God ! it was my first to Thee, —
The offering was of blood ;
I would not feel that this could be
From Him whose name is good !

I thought that science coldly tried
Or failed to try, for me,
What other, happier mothers found
Was bountiful and free.

I thought — God knows — I thought *that* life
 So blended into mine,
 Was wasted cruelly by man,
 Like over-freighted wine.

It was so rich, so bright, so full,
 So redolent of charms ;
 It spoke of manhood's glorious strength,
 And not of Death's alarms !

“ Take me a little while, mamma,
 Only a little while ! ”
 The soft blue eyes looked up to mine
 With heaven's own angel smile.

“ Now sing to me, my mother dear,
 About ‘ the shining shore ’ ; ”
 And on my heart the sunny curls
 Lay streaming, — golden ore !

The chorus rolled, while midnight's chime
 Rang o'er the startled air ;
 But never more came back to me
 That smile so bright and fair !

God gives and takes, and tries to save
 All souls which He has made ;

And from the blood of woman's heart,
And from the gloomy grave,

He wreathes a crown, of crimson hue,
And binds it on her brow,
And says, " Hereafter thou shalt know
The meaning, but not now ! "

A crown of thorns ! it weareth well,
And seemly too and long !
It has no fragrance, beauty none,
To suit a courtly throng ;

But when the Sacred Head which bore
Its virtue and its woe,
In splendor rose, triumphant o'er
The grave and every foe, —

From that august example came,
To waiting hearts and true,
A glory which no cross can shame,
No suffering subdue.

" A little while ! " and then behold
The angel who shall stand,

One foot upon the raging sea,
The other on the land, —

Swearing by Him who liveth aye,
The mystery is done !
Time is no longer ! — mortals see
Eternity begun !



REST.

"There remaineth a rest for the people of God." — HEBREWS
iv. 9.

THERE is a rest beyond the reach
Of time's revolving years ;
Above all power of thought or speech,
Its glorious hope appears

To them that, in the holy faith
Of our ascended Lord,
In meekness bear his sacred cross,
And trust His mighty word.

Girded with strength, they journey on
With bleeding feet and bare ;
Looking in faith within the vail,
They see their Leader there.

On, on they march, though broken hearts
And shrinking flesh attest

That, though they have the victory,
They do not have the Rest.

They take the symbol of their faith
With noble courage high ;
And bear it bravely in the strife,
By this to live and die !

That cross hath such complete success
The erring soul to save,
That life is holy, loss is gain,
And victory o'er the grave.

Far off in that white land of souls,
Tried, comforted, and blest,
They sing the covenant song of God
Entered into His rest.

O Lord, behold thy stricken ones
Along this weary way !
Thy sinful children, fainting 'neath
The burden of the day.

To "seek and save the lost," dear Lord,
In mercy thou didst come ;
Gracious Redeemer ! gather in
Thy wanderers, — bring them home.

Unspotted through this filthy world
 Thy radiant garments trail ;
 And not one sinful, suffering child
 Within their reach can fail.

With anguished hearts and yearning love
 To Thee, O Christ the Lord,
 They look, and touch the streaming folds
 That heavenly life afford.

Not one so far from Thee, but when
 That raiment fair is seen,
 Can reach and touch the hem that comes
 Themselves and woe between.

To thee, the Great Physician, Lord,
 Our sickening souls aspire ;
 Give us the " balm of Gilead " now :
 O Saviour, lift us higher !



TWELVE KISSES.

TWELVE kisses, mamma ! twelve kisses !
For every hour of the night !
For I shall not see you again
Till the sun is shining bright.

“ I want to say my prayers,
And we ’ll have a little talk ;
And then go down, dear mother,
And take a pleasant walk.”

And the little maiden prayed,
Then went to her snowy bed ;
“ Now give me, dear mother, the prayer-book
For a hymn,” she sweetly said.

Mamma went down and left her,
And, later in the night,
When she came to her own slumbers, —
’T was a picture fair and bright !

On her snow-white pillow lying
Was the lovely angel-child,
Her scarlet robe contrasting
With her face so pale and mild.

And her hands held open the prayer-book,
And her eyes were closed in sleep !
O God, this flower was only lent, —
It was too rare to keep !



“ASHES TO ASHES, DUST/ TO DUST.”

LAY her down softly in the narrow bed
God's mercy has provided ; and be sure
To utter low a mild, soft prayer for one
Whose fair life withered early ; for the blast
Was keen, with all too little sunshine ; and
The way was thorny for her tender feet !
O God ! how sad to lie down in the dust
For one so young, so fair, so full of life !
And she was fair and gentle ; and her soul
Was open to all holy ministries ;
And earnestly, in early youth, she sought
The narrow way that leads to heavenly bliss.
Think of her errors tenderly, and let her sins
Be cancelled and atoned for, where above
That high tribunal sits which never errs.
Meekly she bore, and cheerfully, the cross
Of suffering sent by the dear Lord to all
Who would His kingdom share, and now behold
Another saint in glory ! Safe, thank God !

"ASHES TO ASHES, DUST TO DUST." 89

Saved, through the blood of sacrifice. Re-
deemed

Through that "New Covenant," secure and
full

And everlasting! On her brow behold
The amaranthine crown; and in her hand
The harp of immortality, full tuned
To music, which she could not know on earth.

Oh speak her name with tenderness! and let
Your hearts grow purer, as ye think of one
Who, knowing little of this thorny world,
Laid on God's altar all she had to give,
And took from Christ what He gave, too,— the
Cross!

Now, with the loving ones who shared her home
In infancy and childhood, she is found,
Like them, in garb immortal! — angel-robed!
And the great desolation she has left
In hearts bereaved that loved her, knows no
balm

But what the gracious Comforter doth bring
To souls that crave Him only! Gracious Lord,
Strengthen and lift us up; and may Thy peace
Brood o'er the troubled waves of our dark life.
Oh speak with high authority the words,
"Where is your faith?—'tis I. Be not afraid."

BY THE WILLOW.

DOWN in the copse by the willow,
Low on the rock by the willow,
A maiden sat, in the cool of the night,
And her girdle swung loose from her robe of
white,
And her hair streamed gracefully like the light
That streams on the breast of the billow.

Down in the copse by the willow,
Low on the rock by the willow,
The maiden murmured a low, sad song,
And its burden ran thus, "O Love, how long
Shall the fierce war last and the armies throng,
And I sit alone by the willow?"

Down in the copse by the willow,
Low on the rock by the willow,
This fair young child with the raven hair

Wept as she thought of her hero there
Down on the plains where the war-fiends glare,
With the cold, hard ground for a pillow.

Down in the copse by the willow,
Low on the rock by the willow,
A strong, brave arm is round her thrown,
A close embrace, a blessing, "My own!"
And the beautiful child is no more alone
Down in the copse by the willow.

Down in the copse by the willow,
Low on the rock by the willow,
They part who have loved! since the happy
day
When childhood's fancies led the way
To whatever was blithesome and bright and gay,
Near the lovely copse by the willow.

Not in the copse by the willow,
Not now on the rock by the willow,
They meet once more when the fearful strife
Has hurried thousands away from life,
And her stricken heart with woe is rife,
And her breast the strong man's pillow.

No more in the copse by the willow,
On the rock by the weeping willow,
Shall the maiden fair with the raven hair
Look for her lover to meet her there,
For the pine-trees sigh o'er his grave, — de-
spair!
And the earth is his only pillow.



RAMBLINGS AT SARATOGA.

ON the ascent of the Alps, it is said, when the weary pedestrian — fired with the ambition of his class, longing to attain the highest point that human will and energy have ever mastered — reaches a certain spot midway in the regions of air, a seat invites him to repose, and an inscription to gratitude. It reads thus: “Rest, and be thankful.” Not thus speak the whisperings of ambition. He has risen and conquered. But beyond, in the cloud regions, lie realms of glorious beauty unreached, uncomprehended; and why should wisdom speak of rest and gratitude when so much is unpossessed?

Thus, in the rugged road of life, when youth, energy, genius, with passionate strength and seething brain, have barely reached the medium of its yearnings, how scornfully to wisdom’s voice speaks the heart of the strong

man, "Rest, and be thankful!" Who speaks of rest, when the world with all its kingdoms, and the glory thereof, lie at his feet?

"Temptation hath a music for all ears,
And mad ambition trumpeteth to all;"

and the fearful strife between good and evil goes on and on, even unto the end!

Reflections like these suggested, — how, at a place like Saratoga? How, dear, fair child, whose sixteen summers have floated as lightly by as the zephyrs that fan your noble brow this glorious morning? Do you think, little one, that the Great Babylon has come here to rest? New York in the country, — that is all.

Wait and see what it means, when the accepted twentieth has ushered in the season.

Now, with the foliage still in the full glory of spring, and the rippling water gurgling from unsunned depths, with healing powers; now that the song of birds can still be heard amid the noises, and a cosy chat with a friend enjoyed *ad libitum*, we say, — Hail to thee, Saratoga! the unique, the unparalleled! Thy waters are troubled the livelong summer days, and we wait not for friend or angel to give us a healing draught. Alone in thy shady ave-

nues we wander, unattended save by the sweet voice of childhood, and muse upon the past, or reach forth imploring hands to the revealing future !

The past ! it comes to us with angel-voices, bringing consolation. Within the veil they have passed who once trod with us these grounds made sacred forever by the remembrance ! And the vision of golden hair, and eyes that spoke only of heaven, appears to us still from these hills, and tiny arms are stretched out in baby glee, with the heavenly laugh of infancy !

Another vision of a noble girl, with waving plume and graceful form, comes over the sea of memory. Her laugh rings out on the air, her step like the fawn, her noble nature too grand in its lofty truthfulness for the crooked ways of life, — and God took her !

Thus like a benediction come these visions of childhood, for they bring no bitterness. By the river of life these children stand immortal, and drink of waters that bid them live forever !

But memory has other and darker themes, and they too come from the past, surging like torrent waves. We look upward to the heav-

ens, and they give no answer!—into our own hearts, as we stand aghast in the cold darkness, asking wherefore? We have given all we had of precious gifts, and we stand alone in shivering poverty! Is there no recompense? Down through the ages come the divine words, “I am the Resurrection and the Life.” Up from the graves of buried friendship and holy love shall He who abolished death revive all that was *worthy* to us in the history of the past. Not a hair shall perish!—nothing precious can die! “And they shall be mine when I make up my jewels.” The dross only will be consumed. The fine gold shall still adorn the altar. Give the sacrifice freely, with steadfast eye though bleeding heart. “Pay not unto the Lord an offering without cost,” and, in the noble language of the English Liturgy, the “Sanctifier of the faithful” shall be there.

Scattered about here and there we find many a friendly voice and word of cheer. A distinguished physician leaves drugs and doses behind him, and startles “Union Hall” with the exhibition of a pipe from the battle-field of Solferino. A most remarkable pipe, which a

gentleman on shipboard, wishing to possess such a treasure before it landed on these auspicious shores, offered five hundred dollars for ; then, finding it was worth a fortune, wanted to raffle it for a thousand ! It could not be bought. A pipe !

“ Picture it, — think of it ! ”

“ Why don’t you smoke it, Doctor ? ” said a fair lady at his side.

“ Smoke it, my dear ? I, a married man of twenty years’ standing, smoke it ? Why, no sooner should I take a whiff, and see the curling smoke in wreaths above my head, than right in the midst appears one of you exquisite creatures, and there is treason in my heart.”

“ It gives a man something to live for,” said Saxe, the poet. “ Who could commit suicide, owning such a pipe as that ? ”

How can we introduce the beaux and belles of Saratoga ? What they do and what they wear ? What don’t they do ? What don’t they wear ? They come and go, like the butterflies in their season. The illustrious poet aforementioned has given, in immortal song,

an account of their *doings*, and what am I that I should speak?

One of the advantages of Saratoga, and one of its greatest attractions to sober-minded people, is, that here you can do as you please. If you wish to be a butterfly, you can be. If you wish to be a moth, you can. If you only aspire to belong to the human race of ordinary sinners, going about with faculties to use and not abuse, — a heart to look kindly on folly, yet with an appetite tolerably sharp for wisdom, — come and drink the immortal waters! Stand on the hill-tops and inhale the aroma of the pine-trees sighing out their dreamy music! Go into the beautiful cemetery, and see there youth, genius, and beauty laid low! The young, fair child, Margaret Davidson, cut off so sadly, and the mournful inscription from her touching verses, “To die and be forgotten,” on her tombstone. “Whom the gods love die early.” Then go back to the Babel of hotel life, and what will you find there to satisfy this yearning for the unattainable? Nothing. But you will find many a noble heart and many a crushed spirit longing, as you do, for something more! What is it? It is God

saying to His creatures, "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field." But "God is good, and grief gracious"; and as we are only "pilgrims and strangers" at best, we may and we ought to carry as much sunshine as we can along this dreary pathway, and give a word of hearty cheer to all around.

Drink, then, freely of this balmy mountain air; bring "a heart attuned to Nature, to hold communion with her visible forms," and a heart also above it, and you will be happy even in Saratoga, or rather, and better, blessed.



“FROZEN MUSIC.”

FROZEN music!” What is it? What beautiful mind has thrown its scintillations far into the unexplored and inexplorable realms of fancy, to bring to us this gem? Madame de Staël, the gifted, the unhappy, — with an intellect ever soaring, ready to grasp, if possible, the very infinite, yet with so much of woman’s nature, — gifted with all her true and noble instincts, — that she declared herself willing to give all this wealth of genius and power for beauty! Why? That she might be loved! She, the centre of a most brilliant circle, — admired, caressed, sought after by the world’s greatest names, — wanted this, too, this “crown of all humanity,” with all the rest! Nay, she would give all for this. And therefore she was woman, and therefore let her be crowned by the united voice of womanhood with immortal pity. With so much, and yet so little! Was there not one heart for hers to rest upon?

It seems not one. And yet we see she made music for us all, with her strange and glorious gifts. "Architecture is like frozen music," she said; and whether the comparison be considered a quaint conceit, or, as we take it, a thought of wonderful beauty, it matters not. Memory recalls to us now a fairer and purer picture than ever was done by mortal hands, and suggesting far more than any architecture the idea of "frozen music." Can we describe it? With fear and trembling we venture to tell what Nature dashed from her glittering caverns o'er the hills and plains and trees of Saratoga, one splendid night in January. Absorbed in sad and dreamy memories, a dear friend touched us lightly, saying, "What! so much beauty, and dreaming here? Look out into the moonlight and see." Never shall that vision of loveliness pass away.

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

Never shall that hour be forgotten. Down streamed the pale moonlight over hill and grove. On the tops of the tall pines were clumps of snow, artistically tufted like plumes of the eagle's crest. On the tops of the tall oaks and elms, and streaming from their

branches, were silvery fringes and veils of frost-work, — drooping, melting slowly, — weeping thus their tears over the perishing glory of this holy night; while far off in the distance was a slender, frail tree, almost obscured by the surrounding strong ones, — yet not the less observed, — in a misty veil of transparent thinness, stretching forth her fragile arms as if to ask protection from the mighty, — like a fair and lovely girl whose shrinking modesty defends her, and appeals alike to God and man for strength not her own. All over this fleeting beauty was the almost visible presence of Him who said, "Let light be, and light was." All over the heavens was the white moonlight. All over the earth was the white carpet of snow, bathed in the moonlight's splendor. Close beside us stood a friend of many years, gazing with a poet's eye upon all this, and drinking in the inspiration. Unconsciously we whispered, "Frozen music!" And standing thus, we gazed until the change that comes to all earthly things touched the fair vision, and we turned mournfully away, with the ever-recurring feeling, "The great joys of the Lord do not last!" Then higher rose

our thoughts and to holier things, — aye, to the very Presence that created all this beauty ; and the benediction of that hour still remains, and will remain, the touching remembrance of that guiding and ever comforting Spirit which led us then from the mournfulness of this perishing beauty to “ the contemplation of the great White Throne and Him that sits thereon, before whose glory the heavens and the earth flee away.”

Madame de Staël, with whose words this theme began, — let us thank her. Over her weaknesses draw the veil of charity, and bow reverently as we name her, — true genius, and true woman !



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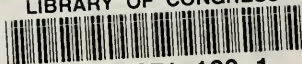




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